

### TRIBUTE TO WILLIAM BAKER WOOLF

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, today I recognize the accomplishments and efforts of Bill Woolf, a longtime Senate staffer and tireless advocate for Alaska's interests. Bill will retire at the conclusion of this Congress and move to his family home on Marrowstone Island in Washington State.

For nearly 30 years, Bill has been an advocate for and friend to Alaska's fishermen. A former resident of Juneau, he began work in 1977 at the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. In 1983, Bill moved on to the Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute, where he became familiar with our State's fishing industry. Bill quickly established a far-reaching bond with those affected by and working in this important industry.

For the past 20 years, Bill has worked in the U.S. Senate as a legislative aide—serving on the staffs of both Frank Murkowski and Senator LISA MURKOWSKI. Staff members like Bill are the backbone of this institution. They meet and work with the administration, State officials, and constituents, and they help those elected to Congress pursue initiatives which will serve their State and our Nation well.

During the two decades that he has worked in the Senate, Bill has been a vigorous advocate for the people and communities of Alaska. Those who have worked with him have the deepest respect for his commitment and contributions.

On behalf of our Alaska congressional delegation and all Alaskans, I extend our appreciation to Bill for his service. We wish him the best in his future endeavors.

### NATIONAL COMPETITIVENESS INVESTMENT ACT

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, I come to the floor to join more than 35 of our colleagues in support of the National Competitiveness Investment Act.

Our country's success is the direct result of our advancements in science and technology. Throughout our history, our scientists and engineers have created new industries—and their efforts have ensured our country's competitiveness in the global economy. Two key reports now raise serious concerns about our ability to continue this tradition.

The "Innovate America" report by the Council on Competitiveness and the National Academies' "Rising Above the Gathering Storm" report, also known as the "Augustine Report," both conclude advancements in science and technology are our country's best hope for the future. They identify serious problems with our efforts in these areas. Sadly, this week the World Economic Forum announced our country has dropped from first to sixth place in its "global competitiveness index."

Our comprehensive legislation addresses several of these issues, and all

of us owe a great debt to Senator ENSIGN, who has shown tremendous leadership in the drafting of this bill. As the new chairman of the Commerce Committee, I asked Senator ENSIGN to chair our Subcommittee on Technology, Innovation, and Competitiveness. Over the past 2 years, he has held a series of hearings on this issue. He also introduced S. 2802, the American Innovation and Competitiveness Act, which the Commerce Committee passed without opposition in May. Senator ENSIGN has worked on a bipartisan basis with our colleagues on the HELP and Energy Committees.

This act is the culmination of these efforts. It will help our country remain competitive by increasing Federal investment in basic research and improving student opportunities in science, technology, engineering, and math. This bill also develops the infrastructure we need to foster innovation in the 21st century.

While this bill alone will not solve all of our challenges, it is an important first step.

I urge each of our colleagues to cosponsor this legislation and vote in favor of its passage.

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, the Child Custody Protection Act prohibits taking a minor child across State lines for an abortion in circumvention of a State law requiring parental notification or consent in that child's abortion. And it gives the victims of our imperfect legal system a means of restitution.

This legislation also protects the integrity of State parental notification laws, and helps ensure that they are honored. Without it, State laws regarding parental notification and consent for a minor's abortion can be flouted with impunity.

Right now, some abortion clinics even advertise to minors living in neighboring States with parental notice and consent laws.

Right now, we are increasing our pregnant minors' vulnerability to health complications. Patients receiving abortions at out-of-state clinics are less likely to return for followup care. And a teenager who has an out-of-state abortion without her parents' knowledge or consent is even more unlikely to tell them she is having complications.

At its core, this bill is about protecting a minor's health and protecting her from exploitation. It is about respecting and honoring State laws. And it is about ensuring parental involvement in the life-or-death decision of their child.

Forty-four States have already seen the grim irony in the fact that teenage students can't go on a field trip or receive aspirin from the school nurse without parental consent, but a young girl can flout State laws and have an abortion—a major surgical procedure—without informing her parents.

This bill helps parental notification and consent laws remain enforceable

and meaningful, and it keeps in place all judicial bypass options and waiver provisions that States have enacted to accommodate young girls who come from troubled or abusive homes.

This simple, straightforward legislation was already passed by the Senate in July by a vote of 65 to 34. It received overwhelming bipartisan support. I am pleased that 14 of my Democratic colleagues, including the Senate minority leader, chose to join me and its sponsor, Senator ENSIGN, in support of this important bill. And I believe this legislation was further improved by the adoption of the Boxer-Ensign amendment, which strengthened provisions pertaining to minors who are caught in abusive home situations.

So it was a disappointment when this legislation was blocked from going to conference by a parliamentary maneuver by my colleagues from across the aisle. On multiple occasions, we sought to go to conference with the House on this legislation, only to have this routine procedural move obstructed.

I would like to commend the work of the bill's sponsor, my colleague JOHN ENSIGN. I am glad that the House chose to pick up this legislation and pass it with instructions.

I believe it is important to pass this legislation, which has the approval of around 80 percent of the American public and is supported on both sides of the aisle. It protects underage minors. It respects and protects parental involvement in the life-or-death decisions of their child. And it prevents the violation of State laws. It should not be allowed to be blocked. I hope my colleagues will join me in voting for S. 403, the Child Custody Protection Act, and passing this long-obstructed, overwhelmingly supported, commonsense legislation.

### NATO FREEDOM CONSOLIDATION ACT OF 2006

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, for more than 50 years, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization has served as a force for stability, security, and peace in Europe. It remains the foundation of security on the Continent and the cornerstone of U.S. engagement in Europe. Today it is the key institution helping to secure a Europe that is whole, free, and at peace.

Not only is it the most successful alliance in history, but NATO has also contributed to the democratic transition of our former adversaries in Central and Eastern Europe by fostering the development of new, strong, and democratic allies capable of contributing to our common security goals. NATO's enlargement over the past decade has strengthened the strongest alliance in history and helped spread democracy and liberty. For this reason, it is essential that we keep the door to NATO accession open for others.

Today, I am proud to introduce the NATO Freedom Consolidation Act of 2006, along with Senators LUGAR,